



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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September designated as small business month

INDIANAPOLIS (August 30, 2006) – Two state agencies charged with leading Indiana's workforce and economic development efforts have joined forces with the state's economic development community to promote Indiana's array of job training grants and other services for small businesses.

September has been designated as Small Business Month by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and Indiana Economic Development Corporation. The two agencies will host forums and visit more than 150 small businesses with fewer than 100 employees to promote the state's tools and resources to help small businesses grow. Partners in the effort include the Small Business Development Corporation and local chambers of commerce.

Targeted business sectors include motor sports and manufacturing, life sciences, logistics, research and development, and agriculture

"We need to aggressively reach out to and provide the small business community with the resources and tools to help them grow," said Ron Stiver, commissioner of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. "Indiana's economic comeback will not be successful unless we effectively promote entrepreneurship and small business throughout our communities."

"Small businesses in Indiana are becoming more and more important to our state's economic future," said Michael S. Maurer, Indiana Secretary of Commerce and Indiana Economic Development Corporation president. "More than 300,000 Hoosiers work for employers of fewer than ten employees, and experts predict that a majority of the new jobs in the country will come from small businesses."

Among the programs the state will promote is the Training Acceleration Grant program which is jointly administered by the two agencies and aimed at training and retraining existing workers. The Training Acceleration Grant program is specifically designed to help small businesses grow and retain their workforce. The program has a sliding match scale to give small businesses additional incentives for investing in a skilled workforce and comes with a simple, streamlined application process, with regional assistance available throughout the grant writing process.

Another program suitable for small businesses is WorkKeys. WorkKeys is a job and skill profiling assessment tool which helps employers find and retain employees, assist employees in the development of long-term career paths and promotes identification of core skills needed for employment success.

The agencies will also promote the network of WorkOne Centers which provide job matching, recruiting, training and transition support services for employers of all sizes.

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development is charged with continually improving the Hoosier workforce by assisting companies to create new jobs and improve worker skills. The agency offers a variety of training and educational grants, partners with Indiana's 26 WorkOne Centers, administers the unemployment insurance system, provides labor market information, assists employers with preparing workers for layoffs and closures and operates a statewide job placement service. For more information visit www.workforce.IN.gov.

As a result of legislation passed by the Indiana General Assembly in Feb. 2005, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation replaced the Department of Commerce as the premier entity charged with state economic development IEDC has a 12-member board chaired by Governor Mitch Daniels. For more information, call 317-232-8800 or visit the website at <http://www.in.gov/iedc>.